

~~TOP SECRET~~

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NSC BRIEFING

21 January 1958

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BACKGROUND NOTE ON TURKEY

- I. The exposure in late December of an incipient conspiracy involving army officers against the regime of Prime Minister Menderes presents a new and dangerous facet to the Turkish political picture.
  - A. At least nine army officers have been arrested and a number of high ranking officers transferred.
    1. Six army generals have been implicated in the plot.
  - B. The 19 January resignation of the Minister of Defense is also probably related to the government's investigation, although the government may only be using him as a scapegoat.
  - C. The army is in charge of the investigation and is planning court-martial proceedings against those charged.
- II. Dissatisfaction within the Turkish army may go much deeper than previously suggested, and any attempt to court martial the suspects on trumped-up charges, such as communist affiliation, could lead to serious repercussions within the army.
- III. Menderes will now be even more sensitive to criticism than in the past and may exploit the situation further to restrict the legitimate political opposition.
  - A. If he attempts to ban the politically strong Republican Peoples' Party there could be a serious reaction throughout the country.

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